

of 36 feet (10.9 m) below the surface of the water.

(c) *Pingers*. (1) For the purposes of this paragraph (c), a pinger is an acoustic deterrent device which, when immersed in water, broadcasts a 10 kHz (\pm 2 kHz) sound at 132 dB (\pm 4 dB) re 1 micropascal at 1 m, lasting 300 milliseconds (\pm 15 milliseconds), and repeating every 4 seconds (\pm .2 seconds); and remains operational to a water depth of at least 100 fathoms (600 ft or 182.88 m).

(2) While at sea, operators of drift gillnet vessels with gillnets onboard must carry enough pingers on the vessel to meet the requirements set forth under paragraphs (c)(3) through (6) of this section.

(3) *Floatline*. Pingers shall be attached within 30 ft (9.14 m) of the floatline and spaced no more than 300 ft (91.44 m) apart.

(4) *Leadline*. Pingers shall be attached within 36 ft (10.97 m) of the leadline and spaced no more than 300 ft (91.44 m) apart.

(5) *Staggered Configuration*. Pingers attached within 30 ft (9.14 m) of the floatline and within 36 ft (10.97 m) of the leadline shall be staggered such that the horizontal distance between them is no more than 150 ft (45.5 m).

(6) Any materials used to weight pingers must not change its specifications set forth under paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(7) The pingers must be operational and functioning at all times during deployment.

(8) If requested, NMFS may authorize the use of pingers with specifications or pinger configurations differing from those set forth in paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(3) of this section for limited, experimental purposes within a single fishing season.

(d) *Skipper education workshops*. After notification from NMFS, vessel operators must attend a skipper education workshop before commencing fishing each fishing season. For the 1997/1998 fishing season, all vessel operators must have attended one skipper education workshop by October 30, 1997. NMFS may waive the requirement to

attend these workshops by notice to all vessel operators.

[62 FR 51813, Oct. 3, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 27861, May 21, 1998; 64 FR 3432, Jan. 22, 1999]

§ 229.32 Atlantic large whale take reduction plan regulations.

(a)(1) *Regulated waters*. The regulations in this section apply to all U.S. waters in the Atlantic except for the areas exempted in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(2) *Exempted waters*. The regulations in this section do not apply to waters landward of the first bridge over any embayment, harbor, or inlet and to waters landward of the following lines:

Rhode Island

41° 27.99' N 71° 11.75' W TO 41° 28.49' N 71° 14.63' W (Sakonnet River)
41° 26.96' N 71° 21.34' W TO 41° 26.96' N 71° 25.92' W (Narragansett Bay)
41° 22.41' N 71° 30.80' W TO 41° 22.41' N 71° 30.85' W (Pt. Judith Pond Inlet)
41° 21.31' N 71° 38.30' W TO 41° 21.30' N 71° 38.33' W (Ninigret Pond Inlet)
41° 19.90' N 71° 43.08' W TO 41° 19.90' N 71° 43.10' W (Quonochontaug Pond Inlet)
41° 19.66' N 71° 45.75' W TO 41° 19.66' N 71° 45.78' W (Weekapaug Pond Inlet)

New York

West of the line from the Northern fork of the eastern end of Long Island, NY (Orient Pt.) to Plum Island to Fisher's Island to Watch Hill, RI. (Long Island Sound)

41° 11.40' N 72° 09.70' W TO 41° 04.50' N 71° 51.60' W (Gardiners Bay)
40° 50.30' N 72° 28.50' W TO 40° 50.36' N 72° 28.67' W (Shinnecock Bay Inlet)
40° 45.70' N 72° 45.15' W TO 40° 45.72' N 72° 45.30' W (Moriches Bay Inlet)
40° 37.32' N 73° 18.40' W TO 40° 38.00' N 73° 18.56' W (Fire Island Inlet)
40° 34.40' N 73° 34.55' W TO 40° 35.08' N 73° 35.22' W (Jones Inlet)

New Jersey

39° 45.90' N 74° 05.90' W TO 39° 45.15' N 74° 06.20' W (Barnegat Inlet)
39° 30.70' N 74° 16.70' W TO 39° 26.30' N 74° 19.75' W (Beach Haven to Brigantine Inlet)
38° 56.20' N 74° 51.70' W TO 38° 56.20' N 74° 51.90' W (Cape May Inlet)
39° 16.70' N 75° 14.60' W TO 39° 11.25' N 75° 23.90' W (Delaware Bay)

Maryland/Virginia

38° 19.48' N 75° 05.10' W TO 38° 19.35' N 75° 05.25' W (Ocean City Inlet)
37° 52.50' N 75° 24.30' W TO 37° 11.90' N 75° 48.30' W (Chincoteague to Ship Shoal Inlet)

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37° 11.10' N 75° 49.30' W TO 37° 10.65' N 75° 49.60' W (Little Inlet)
37° 07.00' N 75° 53.75' W TO 37° 05.30' N 75° 56.50' W (Smith Island Inlet)

North Carolina to Florida

All marine and tidal waters landward of the 72 COLREGS demarcation line (International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972), as depicted or noted on nautical charts published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Coast Charts 1:80,000 scale), and as described in 33 CFR part 80.

(b) *Gear marking provisions*—(1)(i) *Specified gear*. Specified fishing gear consists of lobster trap gear and gillnet gear set in specified areas.

(ii) *Specified areas*. Specified areas are: Southeast U.S. Observer Area, Great South Channel Restricted Areas (including the Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area), Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area, and the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area.

(iii) *Requirement*. From January 1, 1999, and as otherwise required in paragraphs (c)(3)(ii), (c)(4)(ii), (c)(5)(ii), (d)(2)(ii), (d)(3)(ii), (d)(4)(ii), (d)(5)(ii), and (f)(2) of this section, any person who owns or fishes with specified fishing gear in specified areas must mark that gear as specified in paragraphs (b)(2) and (b)(3) of this section, unless otherwise required by the Assistant Administrator under paragraph (g) of this section.

(2) *Color code*. Specified gear must be marked with the appropriate colors to designate gear-types and areas as follows:

Lobster trap gear—red
Gillnet gear—green
Southeast U.S. Observer Area—blue
Great South Channel Restricted Areas—yellow
Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area—orange
Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Area—black

(3) *Markings*. All specified gear in specified areas must be marked with two color codes, one designating the gear type, the other indicating the area where the gear is set. Each color of the color codes must be permanently marked on or along the line or lines specified under paragraphs (c)(3)(ii), (c)(4)(ii), (c)(5)(ii), (d)(2)(ii), (d)(3)(ii), (d)(4)(ii), (d)(5)(ii), and (f)(2) of this section. Each color mark of the color

codes must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water. Each mark must be at least 4 inches (10.2 cm) long. The two color marks must be placed within 6 inches (15.2 cm) of each other. If the color of the rope is the same as or similar to a color code, a white mark may be substituted for that color code. (For example, buoy lines of gillnet gear set in the Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area must have a yellow mark and a green mark, each at least 4 inches (10.2 cm) long, with the yellow and green marks placed within 6 inches (15.2 cm) of each other. If the buoy line is yellow, the gear must have white and green marks.) In marking or affixing the color code, the line may be dyed, painted, or marked with thin colored whipping line, thin colored plastic or heat shrink tubing, or other material, or a thin line may be woven into or through the line, or the line may be marked as approved in writing by the Assistant Administrator.

(4) *Changes to requirements*. If the Assistant Administrator revises the gear marking requirements under paragraph (g) of this section, the gear must be marked in compliance with those requirements.

(c) *Restrictions applicable to lobster trap gear in regulated waters*—(1) *No line floating at the surface*. No person may fish with lobster trap gear that has any portion of the buoy line floating at the surface at any time, except that, if more than one buoy is attached to a single buoy line or if a high flyer and a buoy are used together on a single buoy line, floating line may be used between these objects.

(2) *No wet storage of gear*. Lobster traps must be hauled out of the water at least once in 30 days.

(3) *Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area*—(i) *Area*. The Cape Cod Bay restricted area consists of the Cape Cod Bay Critical Habitat area specified under 50 CFR 216.13(b), unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements*. No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy

lines used in connection with lobster trap gear must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft (0.6 m) below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Winter restricted period.* The winter restricted period for this area is from January 1 through May 15 of each year. During the winter restricted period, no person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with the following requirements:

(A) *Weak links*—All buoy lines are attached to the buoy with a weak link. The breaking strength of this weak link must be no more than 500 lb (226.7 kg).

(B) *Multiple trap trawls*—All traps are set in either a two-trap string or in a trawl of four or more traps. Single traps and three trap trawls are not allowed. A two-trap string must have only one buoy line.

(C) *Sinking buoy lines*—All buoy lines are comprised of sinking line except the bottom portion of the line, which may be a section of floating line not to exceed one-third the overall length of the buoy line.

(D) *Sinking ground line*—All ground lines are made entirely of sinking line.

(iv) *Other restricted period.* From May 16 through December 31 of each year, no person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this restricted period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(4) *Great South Channel Restricted Lobster Area*—(i) *Area.* The Great South Channel restricted area consists of the Great South Channel Critical Habitat area specified under 50 CFR 216.13(a) unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements.* No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Great South Channel Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section.

All buoy lines used in connection with lobster trap gear must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft (0.6 m) below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Spring closed period.* The spring closed period for this area is from April 1 through June 30 of each year unless the Assistant Administrator revises the closed period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section. During the spring closed period, no person may fish with or set lobster trap gear in the Great South Channel restricted lobster area unless the Assistant Administrator specifies gear modifications or alternative fishing practices in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section and the gear or practices comply with those specifications.

(iv) *Other restricted period.* From July 1 through March 31 no person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Great South Channel Restricted Lobster Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this restricted period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(5) *Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area*—(i) *Area.* The Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge restricted area consists of all Federal waters of the Gulf of Maine that lie to the south of the 43°15' N lat. line and west of the 70° W long. line, except for right whale critical habitat, unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements.* No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines used in connection with lobster trap gear must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft (0.6 m) below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Gear requirements.* No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the

Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this requirement in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(6) *Northern offshore lobster waters*—(i) *Area*. The northern offshore lobster waters area includes all offshore lobster waters (as defined in § 229.2) north of 41°30' N lat., except for areas included in the Great South Channel Critical Habitat.

(ii) *Gear requirements*. No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the northern offshore lobster waters area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this requirement in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(7) *Southern offshore lobster waters*—(i) *Area*. The southern offshore lobster waters area includes all offshore lobster waters (as defined in § 229.2) south of 41°30' N lat., except for areas included in the Great South Channel Critical Habitat.

(ii) *Gear requirements*. From December 1 through March 31, no person may fish with lobster trap gear in the southern offshore lobster waters area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this requirement in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(8) *Northern inshore lobster waters*—(i) *Area*. Northern inshore lobster waters consist of all inshore lobster waters (as defined in § 229.2) north of 41°30' N lat., except the Cape Cod Bay restricted area, Great South Channel restricted area and the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge restricted area.

(ii) *Gear Requirements*. No person may fish with lobster trap gear in the northern inshore lobster waters area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this

section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this requirement in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(9) *Southern inshore lobster waters*—(i) *Area*. The southern inshore lobster waters consist of all inshore lobster waters (as defined in § 229.2) south of 41°30' N lat., except the Great South Channel restricted area.

(ii) *Gear requirements*. From December 1 through March 31, no person may fish with lobster trap gear in the southern inshore lobster waters area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (c)(10) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this requirement in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(10) *Lobster Take Reduction Technology List*. The following gear characteristics comprise the Lobster Take Reduction Technology List:

(i) All buoy lines are $\frac{7}{16}$ inches (1.11 cm) in diameter or less.

(ii) All buoys are attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a maximum breaking strength of up to 1100 lb (498.8 kg). Weak links may include swivels, plastic weak links, rope of appropriate diameter, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, or other materials or devices approved in writing by the Assistant Administrator.

(iii) For gear set in offshore lobster areas only, all buoys are attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a maximum breaking strength of up to 3780 lb (1714.3 kg).

(iv) For gear set in offshore lobster areas only, all buoys are attached to the buoy line by a section of rope no more than three fourths the diameter of the buoy line.

(v) All buoy lines are composed entirely of sinking line.

(vi) All ground lines are made of sinking line.

(d) *Restrictions applicable to anchored gillnet gear*—(1) *No line floating at the surface*. No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear that has any portion of the buoy line floating at the surface at any time, except that, if more than one buoy is attached to a single buoy line or if a high flyer and a buoy are used together on a single

buoy line, floating line may be used between these objects.

(2) *Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area*—(i) *Area*. The Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area consists of the Cape Cod Bay Critical Habitat area specified under 50 CFR 216.13(b), unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area under paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements*. No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines used in connection with anchored gillnets must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft (0.6 m) below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Winter restricted period*. The winter restricted period for this area is from January 1 through May 15 of each year, unless the Assistant Administrator revises the restricted period under paragraph (g) of this section. During the winter restricted period, no person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless the Assistant Administrator specifies gear modifications or alternative fishing practices under paragraph (g) of this section and the gear or practices comply with those specifications. The Assistant Administrator may waive this closure for the remaining portion of any year through a notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER if NMFS determines that right whales have left the critical habitat and are unlikely to return for the remainder of the season.

(iv) *Other restricted period*. From May 16 through December 31 of each year, no person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this restricted period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(3) *Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area*—(i) *Area*. The Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area consists of the area bounded by lines con-

necting the following four points: 41°02.2' N/69°02' W, 41°43.5' N/69°36.3' W, 42°10' N/68°31' W, and 41°38' N/68°13' W, unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section. This area includes the Great South Channel critical habitat area specified under 50 CFR 216.13(a), except for the "sliver area" identified in paragraph (d)(4) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements*. No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines used in connection with anchored gillnets must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft (0.6 m) below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Spring closed period*. The spring closed period for this area is from April 1 through June 30 of each year unless the Assistant Administrator revises the closed period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section. During the spring closed period, no person may set or fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area unless the Assistant Administrator specifies gear modifications or alternative fishing practices in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section and the gear or practices comply with those specifications.

(iv) *Other restricted period*. From July 1 through March 31 no person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise this restricted period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(4) *Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area*—(i) *Area*. The Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area consists of the area bounded by lines connecting the following points: 41°02.2' N/69°02' W, 41°43.5' N/69°36.3' W, 41°40' N/69°45' W, and 41°00' N/69°05' W, unless the Assistant Administrator changes that

area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements.* No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines used in connection with anchored gillnets must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Gear requirements.* No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise these requirements in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(5) *Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area*—(i) *Area.* The Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area consists of all Federal waters of the Gulf of Maine that lie to the south of the 43°15' N lat. line and west of the 70° W long. line, except right whale critical habitat, unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Gear marking requirements.* No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines used in connection with anchored gillnets must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line (or 2 ft below a weak link) and midway along the length of the buoy line.

(iii) *Gear requirements.* No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area unless that person's gear complies with at least two of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise these requirements in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(6) *Other Northeast Waters Area*—(i) *Area.* The "Other Northeast Waters Area" consists of all northeast waters (as defined in §229.2) except for the Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area, the Great South Channel Restricted Gillnet Area, Great South Channel Sliver Restricted Area and the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge Restricted Area.

(ii) *Gear requirements.* No person may fish with anchored gillnet gear in the Other Northeast Waters Area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise these requirements in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(7) *Mid-Atlantic Coastal Waters Area*—(i) *Area.* The mid-Atlantic Coastal Waters Area is defined in §229.2.

(ii) *Gear requirements.* From December 1 through March 31, no person may fish with anchored gillnets in the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Waters Area unless that person's gear complies with at least one of the characteristics of the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List in paragraph (d)(8) of this section. The Assistant Administrator may revise these requirements in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(8) *Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List.* The following gear characteristics comprise the Gillnet Take Reduction Technology List:

(i) All buoy lines are $\frac{7}{16}$ inches (1.11 cm) in diameter or less.

(ii) All buoys are attached to the buoy line with a weak link having a maximum breaking strength of up to 1100 lb (498.8 kg). Weak links may include swivels, plastic weak links, rope of appropriate diameter, hog rings, rope stapled to a buoy stick, or other materials or devices approved in writing by the Assistant Administrator.

(iii) Weak links with a breaking strength of up to 1100 lb (498.8 kg) are installed in the float rope between net panels.

(iv) All buoy lines are composed entirely of sinking line.

(e) *Restrictions applicable to mid-Atlantic driftnet gear*—(1) *Restrictions.* From December 1 through March 31 of the following year, no person may fish with

driftnet gear at night in the mid-Atlantic coastal waters area unless that gear is tended. During that time, all driftnet gear set by that vessel in the mid-Atlantic coastal waters area must be removed from the water and stowed on board the vessel before a vessel returns to port. The Assistant Administrator may revise these requirements in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(f) *Restrictions applicable to shark gillnet gear*—(1) Management areas—(i) *Southeast U.S. restricted area*. The southeast U.S. restricted area consists of the area from 32°00' N lat. (near Savannah, GA) south to 27°51' N lat. (near Sebastian Inlet, FL), extending from the shore eastward to 80°00' W long., unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(ii) *Southeast U.S. observer area*. The southeast U.S. observer area consists of the southeast U.S. restricted area and an additional area along the coast south to 26°46.5' N lat. (near West Palm Beach, FL) and extending from the shore eastward out to 80°00' W long., unless the Assistant Administrator changes that area in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(2) *Gear marking requirements*. From November 15 through March 31 of the following year, no person may fish with gillnet gear in the southeast U.S. observer area unless that gear is marked according to the gear marking code specified under paragraph (b) of this section. All buoy lines must be marked within 2 ft (0.6 m) of the top of the buoy line and midway along the length of the buoy line. From November 15, 1999, each net panel must be marked along both the float line and the lead line at least once every 100 yards (92.4 m).

(3) *Restrictions*—(i) *Observer requirement*. No person may fish with shark gillnet gear in the southeast U.S. observer area from November 15 through March 31 of the following year unless the operator of the vessel calls the SE Regional Office in St. Petersburg, FL, not less than 48 hours prior to departing on any fishing trip in order to arrange for observer coverage. If the Regional Office requests that an observer be taken on board a vessel during a

fishing trip at any time from November 15 through March 31 of the following year, no person may fish with shark gillnet gear aboard that vessel in the southeast U.S. observer area unless an observer is on board that vessel during the trip.

(ii) *Closure*. Except as provided under paragraph (f)(3)(iii) of this section, no person may fish with shark gillnet gear in the southeast U.S. restricted area during the closed period. The closed period for this area is from November 15 through March 31 of the following year, unless the Assistant Administrator changes that closed period in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(iii) *Special provision for strikenets*. Fishing for sharks with strikenet gear is exempt from the restriction under paragraph (f)(3)(ii) of this section if:

(A) No nets are set at night or when visibility is less than 500 yards (460 m).

(B) Each set is made under the observation of a spotter plane.

(C) No net is set within 3 nautical miles of a right, humpback, fin or minke whale.

(D) If a right, humpback, fin or minke whale moves within 3 nautical miles of the set gear, the gear is removed immediately from the water.

(g) *Other provisions*. In addition to any other emergency authority under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, or other appropriate authority, the Assistant administrator may take action under this section in the following situations:

(1) *Entanglements in critical habitat*. If a serious injury or mortality of a right whale occurs in the Cape Cod Bay critical habitat from January 1 through May 15, in the Great South Channel Restricted Area from April 1 through June 30, or in the Southeast U.S. Restricted Area from November 15 through March 31 as a result of an entanglement by lobster or gillnet gear allowed to be used in those areas and times, the Assistant Administrator shall close that area to that gear type for the rest of that time period and for that same time period in each subsequent year, unless the Assistant Administrator revises the restricted period in accordance with paragraph

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(g)(2) of this section or unless other measures are implemented under paragraph (g)(2).

(2) *Other special measures.* The Assistant Administrator may revise the requirements of this section through a publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER if:

(i) NMFS verifies that certain gear characteristics are both operationally effective and reduce serious injuries and mortalities of endangered whales;

(ii) New gear technology is developed and determined to be appropriate;

(iii) Revised breaking strengths are determined to be appropriate;

(iv) New marking systems are developed and determined to be appropriate;

(v) NMFS determines that right whales are remaining longer than expected in a closed area or have left earlier than expected;

(vi) NMFS determines that the boundaries of a closed area are not appropriate;

(vii) Gear testing operations are considered appropriate; or

(viii) Similar situations occur.

[64 FR 7552, Feb. 16, 1999]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 64 FR 17292, Apr. 9, 1999, in § 229.32, paragraphs (b), (c)(3)(ii), (c)(4)(ii), (c)(5)(ii), (d)(2)(ii), (d)(3)(ii), (d)(4)(ii), (d)(5)(ii) and (f)(2) were stayed until Nov. 1, 1999. At 64 FR 73434, Dec. 30, 1999, these paragraphs, with the exception of (f)(2), were further stayed until Nov. 1, 2000.

§ 229.33 Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan Implementing Regulations—Gulf of Maine.

(a) *Restrictions*—(1) *Northeast Closure Area.* From August 15 through September 13 of each fishing year, it is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed, or fail to remove sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching multispecies, from Northeast Closure Area. This prohibition does not apply to a single pelagic gillnet (as described and used as set forth in § 648.81(f)(2)(ii) of this title). The Northeast Closure Area is the area bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

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NORTHEAST CLOSURE AREA

Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
NE1	(¹)	68°55.0'
NE2	43°29.6'	68°55.0'
NE3	44°04.4'	67°48.7'
NE4	44°06.9'	67°52.8'
NE5	44°31.2'	67°02.7'
NE6	(¹)	67°02.7'

¹ Maine shoreline.

(2) *Mid-coast Closure Area.* From September 15 through May 31, it is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed, or fail to remove sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching multispecies. This prohibition does not apply to a single pelagic gillnet (as described and used as set forth in § 648.81(f)(2)(ii) of this title). The Mid-Coast Closure Area is the area bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

MID-COAST CLOSURE AREA

Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
MC1	42°30'	(¹)
MC2	42°30'	70°15'
MC3	42°40'	70°15'
MC4	42°40'	70°00'
MC5	43°00'	70°00'
MC6	43°00'	69°30'
MC7	43°30'	69°30'
MC8	43°30'	69°00'
MC9	(²)	69°00'

¹ Massachusetts shoreline.

² Maine shoreline.

(3) *Massachusetts Bay Closure Area.* From December 1 through May 31, it is prohibited to fish with, set, haul back, possess on board a vessel unless stowed, or fail to remove sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching multispecies from the Massachusetts Bay Closure Area, except with the use of pingers as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section. This prohibition does not apply to a single pelagic gillnet (as described in § 648.81(f)(2)(ii) of this title). The Massachusetts Bay Closure Area is the area bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

MASSACHUSETTS BAY CLOSURE AREA

Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
MB1	42°30'	(¹)
MB2	42°30'	70°30'
MB3	42°12'	70°30'
MB4	42°12'	70°00'